

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-12 ADP-00 SS-15 NSC-10 L-03 H-02 SCS-03

SCA-01 SY-10 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

EUR-25 RSR-01 /107 W

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R 181245 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2197

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5749

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, SY, PINS (BATES, JONATHAN)

SUBJ: BATES CASE

REF: BEIRUT 5575

1. IN VISIT BEIRUT MAY 17, HEAD USINT CARDILLI REPORTED FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON BATES CASE.

2. LAWYER BITAR BELIEVED BATES AT PRESENT A VICTIM OF CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION, E. E. RECENT CRISIS IN LEBANON HAS CAUSED SYRIAN OFFICIALS TO BE PARTICULARLY ANTI- AMERICAN. HE HOPES IN NEXT FEW WEEKS CLIMATE WILL IMPROVE (DEFENSE HEARING JUNE 7 AND SENTENCING THIRTY TO FORTY- FIVE DAYS LATER). BITAR SPECULATED TO CARDILLI THAT IF POLITICAL SITUATION WORSENS SYRIANS MAY FEEL COMPELLED TO FIND BATES GUILTY AND GIVE HARSH SENTENCE. THIS IS THE WAY SYRIANS WOULD ADVISE OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD ITS FIRM STAND ON " US- ISRAELI SPIES".

3. NEWLY ARRIVED ITALIAN AMBASSADOR MAVUJZIO BUCCI ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN BATES VWJIIAKAS CARDILLI REPORTS HE IS IN OTHER USINT QUESTIONS) AND PLANS MEET WITH
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LAWYER BITAR BEFORE JUNE 7 HEARING.

4. CARDILLI REMINDS US THAT SHOULD BATES BE FOUND GUILTY THERE IS AN APPEAL PROCESS AS WELL AS ULTIMATE RIGHT FOR BATES TO REQUEST SYRIAN PRESIDENT FOR PARDON.

5. RE PROFESSOR BATES' VISIT, CARDILLI AND BITAR BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL SINCE FATHER'S PRESENCE WOULD EMPHASIZE HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS OF CASE. HE ALSO ENDORSES OUR RECOMMENDATION PARA 3 REFTEL THAT BATES CONSIDER COMING DIRECTLY TO DAMASCUS BY AIR IF SYRIAN- LEBANESE BORDER NOT OPEN.

6. IN FINAL OPTIMISTIC NOTE, CARDILLI REPORTED HE MET WITH SHOEFI, AMERICAN SECTION, SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY, MAY 10. CARDILLI DREZESHOUCAXDORTLTSNTION TO CONSEQUENCES THAT WOULD RESULT IF SYRIANS LEVELED MAXIMUM SENTENCE ON BATES. SHOEFI ATTEMPTED REASSURE CARDILLI THAT IN HIS OWN OPINION BATES WOULD NOT BE SENTENCED TO DEATH. HE ADDED THAT ALTHOUGH COURT WAS MILITARY, ITS PRESIDENT IS CIVILIAN, AND COURT NOT BOUND BY PROSECUTORS' DEMANDS. SHOEFI CONCLUDED THAT HE WILL DO HIS BEST, BASED UPON HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS, TO OBTAIN VISAS FOR PROF BATES TO ATTEND JUNE 7 HEARING.
HOUGHTON

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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